

motion to proceed to S. 2093 ripen at 5:30; and finally, that if any of the nominations are confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator WHITEHOUSE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I want to speak briefly this evening about S. 1, the Senate version of H.R. 1, the democracy reform bill that we are going to be considering moving to proceed to this week, and I hope we will be able to show a unified Democratic Caucus moving to proceed.

It is often described as the voting rights bill, and it is described that way with good justification because there are some very, very important protections that are built into it to protect the voting rights of Americans which are under, I would say, a unique and historic threat now since the, perhaps, 1950s and 1960s, when the Voting Rights Act was passed and some of the levers that were pulled to keep certain people from voting had to be stopped and the vote and the ballot became available much more broadly and led to a much more just society.

But that is not the only part of S. 1. In fact, in my view, it is not even the central part of S. 1. In my view, the central part of S. 1 is getting big, unlimited, anonymous money out of politics.

Now, the two relate because the big, anonymous money schemers that are up to no good in politics are focusing on—guess what? Voter suppression. And, in fact, the same individual, the same person who was running the dark money scheme to control and capture the Supreme Court and the circuit courts has—after being somewhat blown up by a Washington Post expose about the \$250 million he was running in dark money through this court-capture scheme—jumped from court-capture scheme, and where did he land? On something rather ironically called the Honest Elections Project, which immediately went to work to file lawsuits and harass election officials and try to make sure that voter suppression took place.

If you think that is a coincidence, the Honest Elections Project is actually a rebrand of an entity that was called the Judicial Education Project—basically, just a name change through

corporate hijinks. And that Judicial Education Project is the corporate sibling of something called the Judicial Crisis Network.

And guess what the Judicial Crisis Network did? For this same guy, before he jumped to voter suppression, when he was still doing court capture, the Judicial Crisis Network took the big, fat checks that anonymous donors wrote to pay for the TV campaigns—the dark money TV campaigns—against Garland and for Gorsuch in the first appointment, for Kavanaugh through all of his troubles in the second appointment, and then for Judge Barrett on the eve of the election in the third appointment.

So, you see, it is the same person and the same organizational connection between the court-captured dark money scheme and the voter suppression dark money scheme. It is actually happening in kind of plain light of day, except that we don't pay enough attention to the links.

So this dark money business, getting the big, dark money out of politics, is a big, big deal. And I wanted to share how much of a deal it is to Americans. Dark money corruption polls at the top of all the issues in the last poll I saw. It is the No. 1 issue. If you ask people: If somebody says that they have dedicated themselves to fighting corruption, is that going to make you more likely to vote for them or more likely for you to vote for their opponent? Among all voters, it is 89 to 1 more likely to vote for the candidate dedicated to fighting corruption versus whoever this one is who said, no, not such a big deal to me.

Among independent voters whom the two parties always fight for in elections, 82 to 2—82 percent of independent voters would be more likely to vote for somebody who they see as dedicated to fighting corruption, and only 2 would be more likely to vote for their opponent.

So this is a strong public signal that we are sick of it. And you see it over and over again. This is one poll. You can go through poll after poll after poll, and you see people want the dark money out of politics. They think we are controlled by big special interests. They think much too much stuff gets done behind the scenes.

And, by the way, we just got a little window into the private conversations about this that take place between the Koch brothers' political apparatus and our minority leader, MITCH MCCONNELL's political apparatus.

Jane Mayer wrote about this recently in the New Yorker. And the Koch political apparatus and the MITCH MCCONNELL political apparatus were being briefed on this bill, on S. 1, and on these provisions. And what they were told by the pollster is: Do you know what? We are in big trouble because our conservative voters hate this damn dark money stuff just as badly as those liberals do, and we have tried all these different ways to reframe this, to

make it look bad so they might be more against it—none of it worked. None of it worked.

People want their government cleaned up. They are sick to death of big special interest money, and they are particularly sick to death of big special interest money that hides behind fake front groups. So it is not ExxonMobil or Marathon Petroleum that comes to Rhode Island and says, SHELDON WHITEHOUSE is a bum, you should vote against him. No, it is under the phony group with a name like Rhode Islanders for Peace and Puppies in Prosperity. And all they are is a mail drop.

Somebody is behind them, and the voters know in Rhode Island there is no Rhode Islanders for Peace and Puppies in Prosperity. They know they are being had, and they are sick of seeing the ads. And it is not fair to them, as citizens, to not know what is going on in the American governmental process, going on right in front of them.

And it matters to them. It really matters to them. It is the single most important issue for 55 percent of all voters. And among the independent voters we are trying to attract to our separate parties, 58 percent of independent voters, this question of Big Money corruption and government not listening to them, it is the single most important issue—the single most important issue.

Now, make it top three, expand the question. What are the top three most important issues that you care about? Eighty-nine percent of all voters have this in their top three. Eighty-eight percent of independent voters have this in their top three. So let's say you have a real concern about healthcare, or let's say you have a real concern about voting rights, or let's say you have a real concern about the economy—never mind, this is still there in that top three for pretty much 9 out of every 10 Americans.

And what is the level of concern? Very concerned. Very concerned is 86 percent of all voters and 92 percent of all independent voters. About this issue of corruption and money in politics, how concerned are you? Eighty-six percent of all voters said very. Ninety-two percent of independent voters said very.

And if you say: OK, let's, again, expand the aperture a little, very concerned or somewhat concerned? Are you very concerned or somewhat concerned about this dark money corruption, special interest pressure in government—98 percent of all voters, 100 percent of independent voters. I don't know about you all, but I have looked at a lot of polling in my life. Seeing a 100-percent number, that is rare. Every single independent voter polled is very or somewhat concerned about corruption in our democracy.

So I can't wait to get onto S. 1. And if our Republican friends want to filibuster it and stop us from moving forward, I can't wait to see them explain

to their voters back home why they made the choice to come here and, against 89 to 1 for all voters and 82 to 2 for independent voters, take that brave fan for dark money and more corruption and more special interest pressure in our politics. Good luck with that.

I hope at some point we bring that fight to the floor and we spend weeks on it so that as we go into next year, every single American has seen this play out. They have seen that this issue that they are very concerned about, that for more than half of them is the single most important issue, that there is a party here in the Senate that is determined to protect the schemers, the special interests behind the dark money corruption. Good luck taking that to the voters in November.

So to those who are listening and who are thinking: You know, I don't see how we get around a filibuster here.

I love S. 1. This is a really important bill. We have to get there. We hope that the Democrats can unite on this, but even then, it is only 50 to 1 or 51 to 1, if the Vice President is allowed to vote, and that is not 60, so there is a filibuster—my answer is: Give it effort and give it time because once Americans—everybody from a Tea Partyer to a Bernie Bro—gets wind of which party in here is the party of special-interest dark money, who wants to protect that—like I said, single most important issue. People go into the voting booth, and they tend to remember the single most important issue, the issue that they are very concerned about, that 86 percent of all voters.

So I hope we find a good way forward. I think it is important for our democracy that the rottenness of all of this come to an end. I don't want to see more of these academic studies that show that Congress listens to big spe-

cial interests, provably, statistically, and Congress doesn't listen to regular voters, provably, statistically, because of this kind of dark money pressure.

We have got to get beyond that. We have a country out there to put back on its feet not only economically, but we ought to be able to hold our own heads high about having an honest government that is an example to the rest of the world.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:44 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, June 22, 2021, at 10 a.m.